

Santa Rosa County
Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) Task Force
Steering Committee
April 16, 2009
Milton, Florida

The Santa Rosa County LMS Task Force met on the above date. A copy of the sign-in sheet showing attendees is attached in the file. Hunter Walker, County Administrator and Chairman, called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. Introduction and brief background provided for Commissioner Lynchard. Minutes for the meetings held November 2008 and January 2009 were approved as submitted.

S. Harris provided a power point presentation for the benefit of Commissioner Lynchard and the newer members of this committee. She reviewed the definition of mitigation, the purpose and importance of mitigating, and the roles and responsibilities the local, state and FEMA agencies have within the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). She explained the procedure of developing a plan in order to apply for and be approved to receive Hazard Mitigation Funds. The group must develop objectives and initiatives in order to meet the goals. The plan must be consistent with other plans as it serves as a link between the local government plans, codes and ordinances. S. Harris requested that members advise her of any potential businesses or agencies that might be interested in participating in this program, as their input is desirable to develop an effective plan.

S. Harris stated that she believes that as we become more effective at planning and identifying strategies and project initiatives, we have the potential to achieve many of our goals as the funding becomes available. She explained that it is critical to complete the update to the plan in order to maximize the funding. She stated that the funding is obtained mostly in response to disasters. The funds are allocated to the county; we still have to apply to FEMA through the state of Florida and prioritize each of the issues in order to be awarded the funds. H. Walker explained that the funds usually require a 25% match. In the case of private homes, the county enters into a contract with the homeowner and the homeowner is responsible for the 25% match. The other 75% is made up of federal funds.

H. Walker stated that we always struggle to get other parties to participate. It has mostly involved the private sector; however, D. Hahn has been trying to include more of the businesses and agencies through organizations such as SAFER Santa Rosa.

T. Gomillion provided an update to the Chumuckla Community Center project. The engineering department is reviewing the project in order to write the specifications and should be going out for bid soon.

LMS Project Priority List

S. Harris stated that the project priority list requires a great deal of work in order to update its prioritization. She believes that the current method of updating the list may not be the most optimal. She stated the P. Miller emailed to this committee's members two alternative methods to prioritize our initiatives. She suggests that the committee talk about the proposals as a group, review the ideas and come back to the committee with recommendations.

P. Miller gave an overview of the two proposals and pointed out that they are very similar. He explained major differences between them. He stated that both proposals still need to be fine-tuned. He provided handouts to the members for review and stated that the first example is prioritized more through discussion of the items listed. The second suggestion is based more on risk assessment and is much more technical. He provided the costs and the risks for both options.

S. Harris stated that we may want to let each jurisdiction rank their own initiatives. She would like to consolidate the list to approximately 50 items. Some of the items listed have been completed; some of the items need to be removed. Some of the items are no longer valid. We will need to include a reason for removing items from the list of initiatives. We might want to form a small group to review those items. D. Hahn suggested that we email each other with recommendations and that the municipalities be included. After the list has been reduced we can rank the balance of the items.

P. Miller said that utilizing one of his proposals would, as an example, have a department such as Public Works review the items that are related to them, remove those that should not be included, and rank those that are left. A representative from each department or agency could present to the committee their own projects for ranking, including details, costs, etc. S. Furman agreed that if the initiatives are ranked by department personnel, they will become more familiar with the projects.

S. Harris is concerned that any entity not attending the meetings would be unfairly excluded. She also mentioned that the procedure would need to be determined prior to the start of each department ranking their own initiatives. She stated that the list was only 'cleaned up' prior to submission in January 2009. Some projects were removed and others were updated. She suggests that we update the list and then re-prioritize the initiatives. H. Walker indicated that there should not be many changes but agrees that each entity should review. He stated that it may not be necessary to re-prioritize at this time. Discussion ensued regarding the availability of funding. S. Harris questioned which projects would be worked on pending the availability of the funds. T. Gomillion was concerned that because of the size of the list too much time would be spent on lower priority projects; he suggested that efforts be expended on those items at the top of the list.

S. Furman provided an example that according to the Master Plan implemented 10 years ago, many problems in the HBTS area have been eliminated; many other mitigating activities have taken place and the flooding has become minimal in that area. Consequently, that issue would become less important.

S. Harris made a motion that all entities review their initiatives and come to the next meeting with comments and recommendations for each. D. Hahn seconded the motion.

T. LaDue, Division of Forestry, asked if a person can make a presentation to the committee in order to add a project to the list. S. Harris stated that they must complete a proposal and it would be brought to the committee for approval. A new project would need to be prioritized with that agencies items and then prioritized with other projects as a whole.

S. Harris will email a list with the current for to everyone; all entities will re-prioritize their projects and bring their concerns back to the next meeting.

H. Walker directed S. Harris to make sure that everyone has a copy emailed to them and requested that T. Gomillion be responsible for reviewing the county's initiatives. The current list will be updated at the next meeting.

HMGP Funding Allocation / Hurricane Gustav

S. Harris stated that Santa Rosa County was declared for Hurricane Gustav. Funding is available in the amount of \$123,460.00 to all counties included in the declaration. It needs to be determined whether our county will make application for any of the funds. The project would need to be tied to Hurricane Gustav and it must be evident in the application. This committee must certify the project as a priority. She stated that it may be difficult to apply as match funds are stretched at this time.

S. Furman explained some of the effects of Hurricane Gustav. He indicated low-lying area and coastal flooding had some impact, especially in the area of Madura Road. It was indicated that repairs to berms and crossovers will be repaired with public assistance as they are a part of the infrastructure.

P. Bowman stated that the GIS department can track all kinds of damages, when it occurred, how far it extended, etc. The department will provide the service at any time for this committee especially regarding repetitive loss.

H. Walker indicated that the cities should also be notified that the funding is available. The matching requirement would be \$41,000.00. S. Harris stated that the deadline is June 29, 2009 for application and will need the information as soon as possible. It may be that we will not have a project that is suitable for many different reasons including as many projects may be cost prohibitive.

L. Green mentioned that someone may want to investigate the area of Tidewater Drive south of Hwy. 98. There is a creek in the HBTS area and some posts have eroded. It may be something to consider.

LMS Plan 5-Year Update

D. Hahn updated this committee on the status of the 5 year plan. He provided three non-county jurisdictions with a CD as they had no access to the local x-drive. He has received input utilizing the Microsoft Office software, and has been editing and modifying the plan; he believes he is about two-thirds of the way through the plan. His intent is to add the flood plain materials to the 5 year plan. Everyone can view the plan and provide him with feedback about it.

D. Hahn said that he is not changing any of the numbers listed in some of the charts. S. Harris said that we need to, first, update the hard data such as populations, and secondly, update items such as goals that would require some thoughtful contributions. D. Hahn also merged some of the local plans into the LMS plan, e.g. Hazard Analysis and the CEMP.

H. Walker requested that D. Hahn bring a list of those tasks that have been completed and those that are not completed to the next meeting. D. Hahn will bring the updates and hopes that his portion will be complete by the next meeting. D. Hahn stated that he has not reviewed anything in the plan regarding the issue of prioritizing; it may be that it is listed in an appendix at the end of the plan.

S. Harris stated that the public will be expected to have the opportunity to review the plan at a public meeting. She also said that since there are so many counties that are currently updating their LMS plans and that our budgets are limited, some have utilized students from the FSU – LMS intern program. Bay County had an intern working on their plan one or two days a week and it may be possible to share that person.

Flood Plan Update

S. Harris explained that the Multi-Hazard Plan (MHP) consists of information regarding many different types of disaster plans. Through the flood mitigation program they request a specific flood plan. Our current flood plan portion in the LMS plan does not provide sufficient information regarding our flood plains.

Santa Rosa County has been awarded a grant to hire a consultant to assist with the county flood plan. They will be able to generate mapping, help us develop goals and strategies, provide hazard analysis, prioritized flood projects, etc.

The RFP for this position has been advertized and expect to get them back by the end of this month. The Flood Plan Committee will present their recommendation to the BOCC toward the end of May or the beginning of June.

Other Business / Comments

S. Furman inquired whether Santa Rosa County will acquire more funding through the disaster declaration related to the flooding that occurred at the end of March 2009. S. Harris stated that it will take some time but it is probably a given that we will receive funding after the projects are reviewed; we anticipate the funding for repairs. She also said that hazard mitigation funds will follow with mitigation for flooding issues.

Next Meeting Date/Adjournment

The next meeting is scheduled for May 21, 2009 at 1:30 p.m. in the Public Services media room.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the committee at this time, the meeting adjourned.


Chairman